

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1 and 10 are amended and claims 15-17 are added. No new matter is added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies shown to Applicants' representative by Examiners Gray and Martin in the November 21 personal interview. Applicants' separate record of the substance of the interview is incorporated into the following remarks.

The specification is amended to remedy a minor typographical error.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-14 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent Application Publ. No. US2004/0135855A1 to Carrese et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed during the November 21 personal interview, independent claims 1 and 10 require a fluid container having "a plurality of channels to communicate at least the air from the ventilation port between the interior region and the second container." Independent method claim 11 similarly requires a step of connecting the second container to a ventilation port by a plurality of channels to allow at least air to flow therebetween." Although implicitly contained in the original claims, these claims now clarify that separate paths are provided by the channels to communicate air from the vent port to the second container¹.

As agreed to by the Examiners during the interview, Carrese although showing a tortuous path, provides a single path formed from a single channel between the vent port and the second container. The Patent Office originally asserted that each segment of the channel can be a different channel. However, these segments do not define channels as now claimed because they cannot separately communicate air between the port and second container along

¹ These features were originally presented in proposed claims 15-17 discussed during the November 21 personal interview and now incorporated into the various independent claims.

multiple paths. Rather, a blockage in any segment in Carrese would destroy the functionality of the remainder of the segments.

For example, if there is fluid leakage from tipping over of the container or from pressure changes to the container interior, this fluid may flow towards the ventilation port. If it enters the sole channel of Carrese, that channel will become blocked and prevent proper operation of the device. Thus, any fluid leakage near the channel could prevent proper operation of the device. However, when the container contains a plurality of channels as claimed, even if one channel becomes blocked, the remaining channel(s) are open for air communication with the port, allowing for continued proper operation of the device. This problem and solution are disclosed, for example, in Applicants' paragraphs [0029] - [0030], [0033], [0044], [0047].

As agreed to during the personal interview by the Examiners, independent claims 1, 10 and 11 as amended and claims dependent therefrom define over Carrese. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 15-17 are added. Claims 15-17 depend from independent claims 1, 10 and 11, respectively, and further specify that one channel is near one side wall while another channel is near an opposite side wall. This is supported, for example, by Applicants' channels 137, 138. With this structure, even if the container is tipped on one side so that one channel becomes blocked with fluid, the opposite channel can remain open to maintain air flow between the ventilation port and the second container. This feature is not taught by Carrese. Accordingly, claims 15-17 are allowable for their dependence on allowable base claims and for the additional features recited therein.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-17 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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